

Foreword

Welcome to the second annual report on the status of animal health in the United States. As you may know, last year's United States Animal Health Report was our first effort to provide a comprehensive overview of the health of our Nation's vast domestic animal resources. On the basis of the feedback received from stakeholders at home and abroad, our inaugural animal health report was a success. For the 2005 edition, we strove to do even better, updating and refining the report to guarantee that it provides the latest information on issues important to all our stakeholders. To ensure our continued success in meeting our stakeholders' needs, we have provided a form at the back of this report that allows you to send us your comments and ideas about how we can make next year's report better. If you prefer to submit your comments online, or if this copy of the report does not include the reporting form, please go to <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=873681978995> and complete the interactive survey.

In 2005, as in years past, we sought new ways to strengthen and amplify efforts aimed at ensuring that the United States maintains healthy livestock and poultry populations. For example, the National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) was developed recently to screen routine and specific-risk samples for foreign animal diseases (FADs). The newly formed National Animal Health Surveillance System (NAHSS) works to improve early detection and global risk surveillance of FADs. Objectives of the NAHSS 2005 strategic plan include enhancing domestic and global surveillance to identify elevated risks and encouraging the development and application of new technologies for early and rapid disease detection.

In addition, the Emergency Management and Diagnostics division within the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Veterinary Services led efforts in the creation and management of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's National Avian Influenza (AI) Response Team. We held a workshop to determine gaps in USDA policies, plans, and technological capabilities related to high-pathogenicity AI.

Presidential Directive–9 concerning homeland security led to the establishment of the National Veterinary Stockpile. The stockpile includes animal vaccines, antivirals, therapeutic products, and other supplies to respond to an intentional or unintentional introduction of FADs and biological threat agents that would affect agriculture, the Nation's food system, the economy, and human health. The stockpile represents a change in USDA's approach to managing animal and plant disease outbreaks by providing rapidly available supplies of vaccines, therapeutics, and countermeasures for use against naturally occurring animal disease outbreaks or agroterrorism. The United States currently stockpiles vaccines against foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) and AI.

To evaluate current capabilities of the stockpile, we held an FMD outbreak training exercise in 2005 with rapid response teams, incident management actions, and interagency coordination at an incident command center. Management and actions related to movement and quarantine, appraisal, vaccination, euthanasia, and disposal were evaluated.

I believe you will find this report an important and thorough source of information on the status of U.S. livestock, poultry, and aquaculture commodities as well as the programs and strategies used to ensure their continued health.

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